



APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING – February 20, 2009

H. B. No. 6365 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM
ENDING JUNE 30, 2011, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.

DMHAS BUDGET

Good afternoon Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Barry Simon and I am the Executive Director of Gilead Community Services and Board Chair of Connecticut Community Providers Association (CCPA). Gilead Community Services is a mental health provider funded by DMHAS and DCF that serves almost 600 individuals throughout Middlesex County. CCPA represents organizations which provide services and supports for children and adults with disabilities and significant challenges including people with addictions, mental illness, developmental and physical disabilities.

I would like to comment on the DMHAS budget. The budget proposes to convert mental health case management services to community support programs, bundle mobile crisis, crisis respite and acute psychiatric inpatient services for a savings and restructure addiction treatment and methadone rates. While it is important to continually assess the efficacy of services, restructuring that seeks save dollars without reference to quality of care may be problematic.

Equally critical to the provision of care is the historic underfunding of community providers.

The community provider system is a cost effective means of providing vital services that are an integral part of the core mission of government. I am here today on behalf of my clients and hundreds of thousands of individuals served by the community provider system to ask that you look to strengthening the community provider system as a way of addressing aspects of the growing fiscal crisis.

CCPA

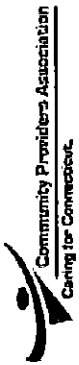
35 Cold Springs Rd., Suite 522, Rocky Hill, CT 06067-3165
(P)860-257-7909 • (F)860-257-7777
www.ccpa-inc.org

We have closed a program and made reductions in others due to the short sighted approach to state budgeting which ultimately will lead to dire consequences for the total community service system.

We recognize and appreciate that the Governor and Legislature want to invest the limited dollars wisely. In order to get the best return on your investment, it is our belief that funds need to be appropriated to address the comprehensive needs of the system and consumers. Given adequate resources that truly fund our costs of services, we will continue to be a cost-effective solution to addressing the growing needs of Connecticut's most vulnerable citizens. However, our funding needs to keep pace with inflation and the growing costs of services if we are meant to even continue services at current levels.

Community Providers are part of the solution for the future of the service delivery system. We ask that you look to preserving the investment made in quality, cost effective, community care. The 500,000 Connecticut residents that use our services need you to help fix this systemic problem before it becomes their healthcare crisis.

I thank you for your time and would be happy to answer any questions.



Medical CPI vs. COLA Increases FY1987-FY2009

